

Executive Registry

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Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20505

12 April 1985

Executive Director

NOTE FOR:

Assistant National Intelligence  
Officer for General Purpose  
Forces

SUBJECT: Your Suggestion for Creative  
Problem Solving

Thanks for sharing your experience  
with the Military Analytic Exchange with  
us. It sounds like a productive forum.  
I'm impressed with your ability to  
accomplish anything in a group of 60  
people.

I passed your proposal on to the DCI  
with a suggestion that he might wish to  
have the DDI take a look at its applicability  
to some of his problems.

Thanks again for your interest and  
concern.



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1 April 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Assistant National Intelligence Officer for  
General Purpose Forces

SUBJECT: Creative Problem Solving

REFERENCE: Your Memo, 28 Nov 1984, Same Subject

1. One of the most difficult concepts to bring to reality is the real sense that the Intelligence Community is alive and functioning. Individual analysts and even entire agencies or organizations too often confuse trees for forests. What is needed is a device, a pragmatic approach which fosters the sense of community without stifling initiative, enterprise and novel thinking. With this, a furthering of the individual who is neither coerced, innundated or sidestepped. We want creativity but we do not want to superimpose another organizational curb. How can we reach these paradoxical goals?

2. This office has found a very simple device which fosters all of these positive goals. It is called the Military Analytic Exchange, essentially a forum for new ideas, new analysis, new solutions to intelligence problems. It neither stifles nor dictates; it offers analysts a channel to suggest their ideas without criticism or judgment--nor agency approval. It allows an analyst to explore his thesis with fellow analysts and during a give and take question period to test its validity against the experience of peers. As it delves into the intelligence problems, it simultaneously fosters a spirit of community.

3. NIO/GPF originated this program in 1983. Since then we have scheduled five exchanges; the last in February  Nearly 60 analysts were present for this last session. Our next will be in late May with the theme "Who's Ahead in GPF Technology." We will invite DIA/DT, CIA/OSWR and USA/FSTC to send representatives to form a panel. We anticipate at least another 60 analysts. We plan to continue scheduling 4 exchanges every year.

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4. Benefits.

NIO/GPF has found that drafters are more easily obtained since we initiated this program. Individuals are even volunteering to draft estimates.

Informal and formal coordinations have been simplified and improved since many analysts now personally know their counterparts having met them at previous exchanges.

25X1 NIO/GPF has developed several topics for the biweekly DCI functional NIO meetings from briefings delivered [ ] in February.

We have begun to share production efforts with the intent to avoid duplication, explore different analysis and research and produce better analyses whether they be national estimates or other agency appraisals throughout the year.

Solutions to problems are being found before coordination meetings. Considerable time and effort is being saved.

NIO/GPF is identifying a new group of experts who can be contacted to offer advice when needed.

25X1 Community analysts are beginning to realize they are members of a bigger organization than their own agencies; that there is another channel for their ideas or solutions. [ ]

5. Suggestion. The Military Analytic Exchange is not intended to be another burden. It is a vehicle to solve immediate NIO/GPF problems and it has done so with numerous serendipitous results. If it worked for us, it should work for others.

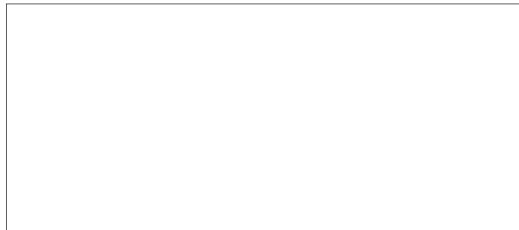
- a. It must not become formal or stylistic. It requires neither agency approval (i.e. approval of individual briefings), formal graphics nor formal text.
- b. It should be problem/solution oriented in order to obtain a wide diversity of analytical approaches.
- c. It should be sharply focused on specific military/geographic/functional/regional problems in order to involve the right number and type of analysts.
- d. It should be managed by the proper NIO or DDI office in order to be professional.

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- e. It should be regular, e.g. quarterly, in order to get the results we have achieved. Too often will exhaust the system, too infrequent will cause it to lose its intent.

I will be happy to assist other offices to set up a similar program if it should find merit.



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